

November 25, 2014

Tom Torlakson  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
California Department of Education  
1430 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Superintendent Torlakson:

Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF) and the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) offer the following comments on the draft History-Social Science Framework.

Founded in 1979 by people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, DREDF is a national law and policy center dedicated to advancing and protecting the civil rights of people with disabilities.

CFILC is an advocacy organization made up of twenty-two Independent Living Centers across California. We work together to increase access and equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

On January 1, 2012, *The Fair Education Act* compelled the inclusion of the political, economic, and social contributions of people with disabilities (PWD) and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people (LGBT) into educational textbooks and the social studies curricula in California public schools. The Act seeks to correct the absence of PWDs and LGBT persons in social studies.

Because the addition of PWDs is new to our state curriculum, and the Framework will be used as guidance by teachers, administrators and parents, we believe it is necessary to highlight the historic contributions of PWDs throughout the draft Framework. Our comments include specific comments to Chapter 2, and general comments related to the course descriptions in Chapters 3 through 5

## Chapter 2

Page 18, Line 129: Holocaust, slavery, **or the institutionalization of people with disabilities**, or some other instance of inhumanity, students should ...

Page 18, Line 137: dissidents who risked their lives to reveal the gulags in the former U.S.S.R; **people with disabilities who protested outside and occupied the Federal Building in San Francisco for 28 days in April 1977, until the Carter Administration issued regulations**

**implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the first federal civil rights protection for people with disabilities; ...**

Page 22, Line 214: agricultural oases. **Students can learn how throughout history the built environment created barriers to education, employment, recreation, and other activities for millions of people with disabilities;**

Page 27, Line 344: observe that in recent years every major social issue, whether civil rights, **disability rights**, equal...

Page 30, Line 399: bisexual, and transgender individuals; **people with disabilities**; and women, as well as efforts to establish...

### **Chapters 3 – 5**

Throughout the Course Descriptions for K – 12, the Framework should include references to disability wherever there are references to the contributions or oppression of minorities, immigrants, LGBT people and women. Other opportunities to raise disability occur throughout these chapters, such as the discussions involving families today and in the past in the elementary grades. Including disability in these types of learning opportunities will help children understand that disability is a natural part of the human experience.

The following suggestions for Chapter 3 and are meant to serve as model language to be used throughout the course descriptions in chapters 3 through 5.

Page 53, Line 237: construct neighborhood structures. **Students are made aware of how physical barriers in their communities such as curbs and steps are barriers for people with mobility impairments such as people who use wheelchairs;**

Page 57, Line 311: Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, **or California's Ed Roberts' Day.**

Page 72, Line 651: others, **or a picture book on Helen Keller will demonstrate that impairments do not limit the contributions that people with disabilities can make.**

Page 75, Line 715: **Louis Braille**, Einstein, Golda Meir, Jackie Robinson, Sally Ride

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We appreciate your attention to the inclusion of disability throughout the Framework and would be pleased to answer questions or provide resources.

Sincerely yours,



Susan Henderson  
Executive Director  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund



Teresa Favuzzi, Executive Director  
California Foundation for Independent Living  
Centers